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FURTHER NOTES ON THE MASAI OF KENYA COLONY.

[With Plates XIII-XV.]

By D. Storrs Fox.

Preface.

My excuse for writing the following is that in the capacity of District Officer, Kenya Colony, I have administered the Kenya Masai for periods aggregating rather more than three years between 1925 and 1930. Being able to speak the language fluently, and having observed their life and habits from day to day, I can supply a certain amount of information supplementary to the notes recently published in the *Journal* (pp. 185-208) by Mr. Leakey and the earlier work of Sir A. C. Hollis (*The Masai*, by A. C. Hollis, Clarendon Press, 1905). I have avoided repeating facts already recorded by these two authorities except where I can add to them or correct them.

In the following notes the first part consists mainly of additions to and comments on Mr. Leakey's article. Later on, I have dealt with other matters with which I am conversant. By the Masai I mean the people who comprise the territorial sections enumerated in the age-group table below. There are other tribes sometimes called Masai, *i.e.* the Uasin-Gishu, Arusha, Samburu Njampa and Ngurumen, of doubtful origin and divergent customs to whom this article does not refer.

The Masai are a secretive people, suspicious of strangers, and unwilling for the most part to discuss with them their customs. But there live amongst them a number of natives of other tribes such as Kikuyu, who have been adopted by the Masai. Such folk are very ready to expatiate on Masai customs, but their testimony is often misleading because it is only half the truth.

Until recently I had no idea of setting down in writing the facts which I knew about the tribe. I made myself acquainted with their language and customs simply because, without such knowledge, I should have been largely unable to appreciate their point of view or make decisions and give advice of value to them.

As there are many things still to learn about the Masai, I have omitted the matters on which my information is as yet insufficiently verified.

Childhood. Games.—Little girls sometimes play with dolls. These are made crudely by their mothers of mud, which them dries. I have seen a little girl dressing her doll with a bit of cloth, giving it milk from a tiny gourd, suckling it at her breast and rocking it to sleep, just as a European child might do. The Masai name for a doll is *Ilo-gorai o-o-sarayi ap*, which means child of mud. (See Hollis, p. 331.)

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684 *Boyhood. Sex Life.*—In past times uncircumcised boys were severely punished by the warriors if they had sexual intercourse with a girl of any sort. This is no longer the case, probably because the warriors are afraid of Government interference should they ill-treat the boys.

[718] [848] Should an uncircumcised boy have intercourse with a married woman he may, when his time comes to be circumcised, fail to find an elder who will sit behind him according to custom and hold him during the operation, but may have to sit unsupported. In an instance which I observed a boy who had so offended was circumcised in due form on payment of a fine of four cows.

[364] 881 The elders who decide when a new circumcision is to take place are those of the *Ol-Piron* generation to that which is about to be circumcised.

Ol-Piron means a foretick, and its significance is explained below under organization of generations and ages.

Ceremony of Driving the Ox by the Horns.—The Masai call this ceremony *Kudolomi e ol-Gitoq*, which means the tossing of the ox. *Ol-Gitoq* is the general word for an ox and is not confined to the one used at the ceremony. It must be performed first by the Il Kakonyuki section. I have not seen it performed.

881 *Circumcision.*—I will endeavour to describe a circumcision as I saw it. On my arrival a few minutes before sunrise the two boys who were candidates were standing naked and shivering outside one of the village gates. They had previously been completely shaved. An old man poured a little water over each from a pannikin. Ox hides were brought out and each boy sat on one. Each boy was held by an elder sitting behind him. They were just outside the village with their backs to the thorn fence which encircles the village. The operator appeared and circumcised each in turn. He was a Kikuyu and performed the operation with a dirty-looking razor of a type made in Birmingham or Germany.

[304] [813] As soon as the operation was finished new sandals were put on the boy's feet by the elders; and the elder who was sitting behind him stood up, still holding him, and walked him off backwards through the village gate.

As soon as both boys had been circumcised the operator rushed off to repeat the performance at a village near by before the sun was high. I went back into the village with the elders. One of them drew blood from the neck of an ox for one of the candidates. We went into the hut of the mother of one of the candidates, where the boy sat silent on a bed while we elders refreshed ourselves with honey wine. The boy is not allowed to speak for a period after the ceremony, but I have forgotten the length of the period.

[303] A branch of a tree is tied to the front of the boy's mother's hut by bastion thongs passed through the wall.

566 198 *The Functions.*—Nowadays the novices do not need to remain in this stage till all the other candidates have been circumcised, but shave after a few months. They

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are often called *I-Sipidia* or *'Loiborton* (see Hollis, p. 298, Pl. XIX). They shoot at girls with wax-headed arrows, and a girl who is shot must then give the novice a ring, which is usually, if not always, of a special type, being very much curled and twisted. The novices must observe the following rules :—

They must enter the village before the cattle every evening.
Must not drink blood or eat meat or touch it with the hand.
Must not wash.
Must not have sexual intercourse with girls (this is not kept strictly).
Must not fight or be struck by anyone. Anyone who strikes a novice must put milk on his head.
Must not go out in the day time without the head-dress of stuffed birds.

O-Sipidia, plur. *I-Sipidia*, is the general word for any dance. (Cf., p. 191.)

Warriorhood.—The Age-group system plays such a large part in the tribal organization that I will deal with it in detail.

A right-side circumcision is called *E-Murata e intore* — the circumcision of right. A left-side circumcision is *E-Murata e kedyanga* — the circumcision of left.[1]

Each of these groups is called *Ol pore*, an age-group. Each age-group takes a temporary name soon after circumcision and receives a new one at its *E-Unoto* ceremony. For example, the present age of Purko warriors was called *Il-Tingi* prior to their *E-Unoto*, when they took the name of *Il-Sukuuk*.

A right and a left age-group together form a larger group, which I shall refer to as a generation in contradistinction to an age. The term for a generation is *Ol ayi*, but it is also often loosely designated as *Ol pore*.

Speaking generally, each section has a different name for its warrior age-groups. The exceptions are (a) Loita and Siria. (b) Kaitetei, Il-Odokilani and Keekonyokie, who respectively share a single *E-Unoto* ceremony and therefore have age-names common to their respective groups.

The generation names emanate from the Kisongo in Tanganyika Territory and are common to all the Masai. They are given soon after the warriors of the combined ages have become elders. Thereafter the age-names tend to fall into disuse and be replaced by the generation-name.

A large number of names is given in Hollis, p. 303, but forms an indiscriminate mixture of age- and generation-names.

In the following table I have confined myself to names in everyday use in order to avoid errors and make for simplicity.[2] It will be noted that several sections do not have a left-side circumcision. In the remaining sections the right side is more popular than the left.

[1] I do not know the origin of the terms "right" and "left."
[2] For other generation-names see History, *infra*.

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561 639 629 *Sirit.* The age-group of each section forms one or more sirit or companies. Each sirit has its *Aigwenan*, who performs some of the duties of a captain. The word literally means ensemble. One of the captains is considered to have authority over all the age-group as well as his own sirit, and he is called *'L-Aigwenan l'al parre* in contrast to the others who are *'L-aigwenak loo sirit.*

As an example of the sirit divisions, the D. *Kitoip* age-group of the Purko has three sirits—D. Simbeiko, *'L-Aiteti* and D. Kanyeno.

When the warriors become elders the *Aigwenak* usually retain their authority.

(a) Generation across sections to all the Masai:—

D. Kyanguni. Very few survivors now.
D. Kimeri.
D. Tukula.
D. Tarakwa. The present ruling elders and *Il-piron* belong to the present warriors.
D. Purrko (?). This is believed to be the new name given to the groups who have most recently become elders. It had not come into general use in Uasin Gishu when I left that Boy. I therefore give below the various age-group names of the members of this generation:—

(b):—

Section.	Purko.	Loita and Siria.	Kaimajiani.	D. Damat.
Generation { Right hand	D. Sinetumet.	D. Kishumpiro.	D. Simbeiko.	D. Sinetumet.
Left hand ...	D. Kitoip.	Unas.	I. Mayeni.	D. Kitoip.
Right hand	D. Saiteti.	I. Kimeriro.	?	?

Section.	Kaputiei, Loitokitok, Matapato.	D. Dalalekutuk.	Loitokitok.	Kisongo.
Generation { Right hand	D. Lkerii.	?	D. Kilumi	?
Left hand ...	Unas.	?	Unas.	D. Kuntolilo.
Right hand	?	?	?	?

Some of the names are omitted because they have not yet been given, and others, e.g. the D. Dalalekutuk, because I have not had anything to do with them and do not know the names yet.

An *Aigwenan* appears to be chosen by the first initiates [of] the elders, but if he proves unsatisfactory the warriors sometimes unite themselves successfully to get him changed.

561 *Il Piron.*—The elders of the generation next but one senior to another generation are said to be the *Il Piron* of that generation. Thus the *'L-kimeri* are *Il Piron* of the D. Tarsit and the D. Tarsit are *Il Piron* of the present warriors, e.g. D. Saiteti.

An initial above, Of Piem means a Scottish. I have been given a name for the use of this term, but was not convinced of its truth. The elders of the *Of Piem* generation stand in a particular position of guardians to their juniors for complete their authority to a far greater extent than they do that of those of other generations. This relationship has considerable political as well as domestic importance. 561

Manyatta.—The rule is the rule for a single manyatta, except when the whole age-group of a single area combine to form one manyatta for some ceremony, e.g. the *B Dance.* 561 562 648

For some years the policy of Government was directed towards suppressing the warrior system, and manyattas were prohibited, each warrior being required to live in his father's village. With increasing control and understanding of the tribe this rule has been somewhat relaxed, and the warriors are now commonly allowed to have manyattas provided that they continue to behave themselves before the law.

But the general effect of Government policy has profoundly modified the original customs with regard to warriorhood, and it is now rather difficult at times to know exactly what these were. The main political effect is that warriorhood lasts for a much shorter period than formerly, and most men marry and become elders within four or five years of their circumcision. 561 (?) 561

Nowadays the parents are somewhat unwilling that the girls should live in the manyattas, and as there are only a few of these to be seen there.

A manyatta usually differs structurally from an elder's village in that it is simply a circle of huts without the usual thorn hedge round it.

Sex Life.—The word written by Mr. Leakey translate would perhaps best be 936 spelt as two words Pamoki ipuk. Pamoki is a second person singular equivative of 610 a *Suiteo* word (see Hollis, p. 77) which I have never heard except transcribed by 614 Mr. Leakey. *Ipuk* means " we " or " us "

When a man has been accepted by a girl who has been so selected he usually holds out his hand to her with the tips of his forefinger and thumb touching to form a circle. She is then supposed to break the circle so formed with her forefinger. This is regarded as making her acceptance binding. [561] 936

It is a great disgrace for a warrior to cause an uncircumcised girl to conceive, and he must kill an enemy in order to wipe it out. This is, in fact, the real reason for *the occasional murders of people of other tribes, frequently ascribed erroneously* to a desire on the part of the murderer to " blood his spear." 892 (?)

The B Dance Ceremony.—Nowadays this takes place from three to five years after initiation. It is not a single ceremony for the whole of the Moral, but there are a number of separate ceremonies according to the groups concerned in any age-group with whom 561 884

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The *Lolos and Siria E-Unoto* ceremony took place in July, 1930, and lasted three days. They invited me to it, but, owing to pressure of political work, I was unable to arrive till the morning of the third day at about 10 a.m. (Pl. XXII, Figs. 1-5, and Pl. XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

The Masai definition of the *E-Unoto* is as follows:—

"The *E-Unoto* is a religious ceremony of blessing of the age-group, after which the warriors have leave to marry.

"The *O-Siapiro* gives the warriors permission to have sexual relations with initiated women."

The warriors were dancing at the time (Pl. XXII, Figs. 1 and 2). After about an hour they went off to a spot about a mile away in the forest, where I was informed that they sacrificed a bullock as a chorus.[1] They returned about 3.30 p.m., about twenty of them being dressed in a manner similar to that of the three functionaries (Pl. XXII, Fig. 3). They danced round the *O-Siapiro* hut, and those warriors who were entitled to enter it led their families up to where some were living as it. The warriors then squatted down in a close group in the centre of the manyatta, while some elders walked round them drinking honey-wine and spraying it out of their mouths over the group as a blessing. Others of the elders sat by the *O-Siapiro* hut and refreshed themselves with honey-wine. It was at this point of the proceedings that the age-group of warriors was named *Iriaiviu* (from *ivok-aviu*, plural). This terminated the festival.

The chief functionary is the *Ol-Oiboni*, but I cannot say what part he takes, having arrived so near the end of the ceremony. He is held in great reverence for years afterwards, and it is unlucky for the age-group if a misfortune befalls him. He must not take part in political affairs. He is always spoken of as *Ol-Oiboni*, and his son, when he grows up, is known as the son of *Ol-Oiboni*. (Pl. XXII, Fig. 1.)

There is a minor official called *Ol-Oiboi engidon*. *Eng-doi* is a thong of leather. If my spelling of the first part of the title is correct it would perhaps mean "He who splits the thong." But there are several words from which it might derive, and I have no knowledge of his duties to assist me in checking my spelling of the name.

O-Siapiro (*Thingira*).—Being ignorant of Kikuyu I had been puzzled by this word prior to reading Mr. Leakey's article. At the *Lolos E-Unoto* it was built just within the eastern edge of the village. The village consisted of a circle of huts about 300 yards in diameter. I looked in to the *O-Siapiro*, but it was too dark to see anything. It was made of very strong grasses like an ordinary hut, but was much bigger. Ranged against the wall outside were the heads of numerous cows which the warriors had slaughtered.

I was informed that NO of the warriors had had sexual relations with initiated women and could therefore enter the *O-Siapiro*. After the *E-Unoto* the

[1] Masai, *Enkiokyoto*, the general word for a chorus.

warriors may have sexual relations with initiated women. This is regarded as being the first stage in a warrior becoming an elder.

The warriors have their heads shaved—usually by their mothers—at the close of the *B Ceate* ceremony, but they allow the hair to grow again, and plait it into a pig-tail when long enough.

Milk Drinking by Warriors.—A warrior may not drink milk unless it is handed him by another of his age-group. They must therefore always go about in parties of two or more. The procedure on arrival at a village where they want some milk is as follows :—

The warriors enter the village and stand in the open space within the circle of the huts till one or more of the old men come to greet them. They ask for a hut of their age-group, or, failing that, a hut of an elder of their *B Fiwa*. On being shown a hut to enter they go in and sit down on a bed or the floor, and wait till milk is handed to one of them (*for description of hut see p. 460 E.*). He shakes up the milk, removes the cap of the gourd, and hands it to his companion, who drinks it. If only one gourd is brought they share it, handing it from one to the other. If a second gourd is brought the warrior to whom the first gourd was originally handed may open it and drink it himself provided that he has given the first gourd to his companion. Drinking after a drink of milk is a sign of rejection and is good manners, showing the guest's appreciation of the hospitality of his host.

B Ki'aluo of Milk.—This ceremony is performed by each warrior individually. He is given milk by an elder in his mother's hut, and drinks it by himself. He shaves his head and does not grow a pig-tail again. Thereafter he may drink milk by himself. He usually marries very soon after this ceremony, and is no more regarded as a warrior after it. The ceremony usually takes place somedays a year or two after the *B Ceate* owing to Government policy of reducing the period of warriorhood as much as possible. In the Fadu, most of the *B Sidandi* have already performed their milk *Ki'aluo*, although there is as yet no left hand age-group for their generation.

I have heard it said that in some tribes there is a ceremony of handing over warriorhood from one generation to a junior one. Among the Mumi there was no such ceremony. When the young warriors of a new generation became strong enough they fought and defeated the old men, taking on the warriorhood by force.

Mumi Feasts.—No man may eat meat which has been touched by an initiated woman until he has performed the second (*B Ki'aluo* ceremony, which was the *Ki'aluo* of meat). After that he may eat meat which a woman has touched if he likes. The 1) Nyamwezi and 2) Kitoby age-groups of the Fadu were said to be going to have their meat (*B Ki'aluo*) in June, 1930 ; but I left Africa before it was due, and therefore cannot describe the ceremony.

A man of the generation immediately older than the warriors must not be seen eating or drinking milk by a warrior until one of the warrior age has given him a bullet.

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[SL] Prior to the event (*E.Ky'ukor*) the men event out meet in the forest or bush. [A.F] They build a small round enclosure, called (*E Pol*, of thorns with one entrance about [MG] 3 ft. 6 ins. high through which one must crawl. Here they store the meat, and sleep. They may eat the meat either within or without the (*E Pol*. There is a picture of an (*E Pol* opposite p. 290 in Hollis.

[HG] The meat is pierced by a wooden spit about 18 ins. long. This is stuck in the ground by the fire and the meat is roasted. Soup is also made of fat and water and the bark of *E Kitalawa* or *E Kiborobi* trees. The decoction of these barks makes the warriors drunk. They also sacrifice to this same the various hysterical [PH] fits into which they frequently fall when excited. I was weak for the *E Kitalawa*, small doses of which do, in fact, produce a fierce and unbalanced state of mind. I have never tried the *E Kiborobi*.

[GL] When the warriors sleep in an (*E Pol* they pray to God as warriors on behalf of their age-group. Each one takes his shower and rubs it in the ashes of the fire in the (*E Pol*. He then goes out of the entrance and strikes the side of it and walks towards the East emitting his prayer and striking trees with the shower. While [SL] returning he sings the war song (*Eng-ipolosi*) of his age-group. As he re-enters the [M.F] (*E Pol* he thrusts the shower into the thorns at the entrance on his right and leaves it there. There are usually always a bundle of showers to be seen in this [SM] position.

The prayer is as follows:—

[EL] "*Ye Ai entoomoo ainkolosi olmeishukiro enkiki ainkolositoo loonoo loonoo ilʼ ngarok ol loghonyo. Ye iye Eng Ai entoomoo isipiki igesh ingishiro nanny'ang'anyi. Kun iye Eng Ai nanyio Ye Ai tolingishi igesh ol pore noo ol kiki. Kun iye Eng Ai nanyio isipiki igesh nanoon il ngarok il loghonyo ainkolosi il ewangesh nelingana kolilino ewangesh nanoon il ngarok il loghonyo. Aainoomoo Ye Ai nooro ai enghilang nenkiyo l'al enkiki tangoro igesh il till ewangesh.*"

Here is the translation:—

"O God I have prayed Thee (saving some evil) (that with my garment unbowed). Thy (warriors) have come out here, let not wild beasts hurt my land. And Thou O God I have prayed give us the cattle which pumps steadily. And Thou O God I have prayed bind together for us the age-group in one garment. And I have said to Thee O God let not the wild beasts hurt the herds of the forcasts ones who have come out here and let them not hurt the herds of other forcasts ones who come from far away. I have prayed Thee God, my beloved, when the sun rises from the valley, make then us with the eyes which are lucky."

Each age-group has a different song. The song of the (*E Kiteiy* is "*Pangoroki igesh Ailoma nanoon nelitoro iolitoroto o nooroi nemeki ol nooroi le nagol ainki.*" I cannot translate it however, like other Maasai songs, it is couched in rather cryptic language.

Marriage.—The warriors may not marry till after the *E-Unoto*, and do not usually do so till after their first *Ol-Kiyaloo*. The case stated by Mr. Leakey[1] in which a warrior cannot have sexual intercourse with his initiated wife, is therefore hypothetical, and does not occur in practice.

The cattle required for the bride-price are payable on the birth of the first child, and cannot be reclaimed if the wife dies or runs away, however the husband has got the child. Wives live with their husbands, but they are common to their husband's generation, not his own exclusively. Thus if a stranger comes to a village where lives a man of his generation he may choose in which hut belonging to his generation he will sleep. When it is time to sleep it is the custom for the owner of the hut to vacate it and leave the stranger with his wife. It is quite lawful and proper for the stranger to have sexual intercourse with the woman provided that she consents and that the restrictions (see p. 000) are observed. It is said that if a woman too persistently unwilling to allow the members of her husband's generation to have intercourse with her she may be severely admonished, and her husband may be fined a number of cattle.

On the other hand, the members of one generation are extremely jealous of generations older or younger than themselves. A fight between generations is very likely to occur if the man of one generation find that a man of another has had intercourse with one of their women.

If a woman who has borne children leaves her husband and lives apart from him, he waits till his eldest son is old enough, and then sends him to fetch her back.

A man may not have sexual intercourse with the wife of his full brother (another's own), but may have it with the wife of a half-brother (name below, different mother) who is of his generation. He may not have intercourse with his wife's sister or half-sister.

A husband and wife may not call each other by their names.

Father-in-law Mother-in-law Son-in-law Daughter-in-law	Must not be addressed by name

Family.—The name for a family is *Ol Mara*. Relationship is not recognized beyond first cousin. The Maasai take little interest in their genealogies and one seldom hears their ancestry beyond the fourth generation. Nevertheless, if a man is of pure Maasai descent, *Ol Maasinti aimit*, he is proud of the fact.

Death and Burial.—Dead bodies are disposed of by the hyenas, except for those of Laibons or very influential old men. These are buried under mounds of stones.

[1] See p. 000 of this volume.

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915 The Masai know nothing of a life after death, but it is thought that *Laibons* may live on in the form of black snakes.

916 If a death occurs in a hut it is not evacuated until the village moves in the ordinary way (the Masai being nomadic, seldom stay for long in one village). If, however, the village only moves to a new site close to the old one, the family in which the death has occurred must move further away and remain away for two or three months.

917 If a woman has lost her eldest male child she binds a few turns of iron wire below the knees of her next surviving son, in order to make him look like a girl* that death may pass him by. A man still wears these coils of wire even when he is old. Such a man is nicknamed *Ol o sapinyi* (*the man of the iron wire*).

918 If the head of the family dies a white or a black bullock is slaughtered, and the people smear the fat from the front of the ribs on their bodies and on the garments of the deceased.

919 *Sickness and Medicines.*—The Masai have their treatment for numerous diseases. Members of the *Il Dareroro* clan appear to be the most skilled in medicine. They have often shown me herbs which they use, but I have for the most part forgotten the Masai names for them, and lack of botanical knowledge prevents me from giving their scientific names. Such Masai as understand the use of herbs have never shown any reluctance to tell me about it.

Sheep's fat plays an important part in nearly all their medicines. For instance: (a) If a Masai is bitten by a mad dog (disease called by Masai *Nong'a getok*, presumably rabies) a sheep must be immediately slaughtered and the fat boiled with bark of *Il Kilumiti* trees. The sufferer drinks this mixture and his skin is smeared all over with the contents of the sheep's stomach. This is said to be a certain preventive if done at once. I described the treatment in greater detail in an appendix to the North District Intelligence Report for April, 1929, and it is probably still on file in the Government office.

(b) *Anthrax* (Masai *Endevit*).—When this disease appears as an external sore a sheep is slaughtered and the sheepskin is bound round the affected part. The patient drinks the fat of the sheep. He must on no account be allowed to drink water or milk, and if he does so he is almost certain to die. This disease is fairly common among the Masai, but they usually recover from it. In the opinion of some Europeans the Masai treatment is more efficacious than ours.

920 *Honey Wine* (Masai *En-Aisho*).—This is much used at religious ceremonies and other occasions of importance. It is a very pleasant beverage. To make it, honey and water are mixed in about equal quantities in a special gourd called *E-Mauri*, literally "the egg." To this are added the dried fruits of the *Saranga*

[Turn]

* Immature girls wear big ornaments of iron wire.

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tree (I do not know its scientific name) cut in pieces lengthwise (Masai call them *E Sapuro*). The mixture is put in a warm place to ferment for two, three, or four days. The alcoholic content varies according to the time it has fermented and the proportion of honey to water. It is sometimes very potent. The *E Sapuro* are removed when it is fermented enough. An inferior quality of wine can be made by substituting sugar for honey. 973

Clans.—The Masai clans are patrilineal. The clan organization governs marriage, adoption, and inheritance. The two last will be discussed later. The clans are therefore of domestic rather than political importance. The clan organization extends throughout all the Masai, largely independent of the territorial section organization. The following instances, however, would seem to indicate that they follow territorial grouping to a slight extent:— 614

Loitokitok contains about equal numbers of *'Loorok Kiteng* and *'Loodo Mongi* (terms explained below). The Kabutei are predominantly Il Molelian, but the other clans are represented. The Il Dalalegutok are nearly all of the Laitayok clan. In the Purko the Laitayok clan is unrepresented.

The clan name Laitayok may or may not have a connection with the small territorial section of the same name situated in Tanganyika Territory. In Kenya Laitayok is a true clan which divides into sub-clans, and it is as such that I propose to treat it.

All the Masai clans[1] are contained within two main groups called *'Loorok Kiteng*, meaning "the [people] of the black ox," and *'L-oodo mongi*, meaning "the [people] of the red bullocks." (I do not know the origin of these terms.)

If the warriors make a successful raid the raided stock is first divided into two parts, one part for each of these main groups, which then subdivide the spoil amongst themselves.

The 'Loorok Kiteng are comprised by the following main clans:—'L Aiser, 'Laghumae, 'L Aitayok, Il Bartimaro. Sometimes these are loosely grouped together and all called 'L Aiser.

The 'L Aiser clan proper has the following sub-clans:—'Il-kidongi, Il Parkonoti (?), Il Leketoi, Engeji Nanyuki, 'Loodo Kishu.

The 'L Aitayok subdivides as follows:— Siria, Il Pujoe, Il Mokojorio, Il Marumae.

I cannot remember the sub-clans of the 'Laghumae or the Il Bartimaro.

The 'Loodo Mongi contains the following main clans:—Il Molelian, Il Damanro, Il Megnwa. I cannot subdivide them from memory.

I once wrote down a table of clans and sub-clans, but have not got it to hand. It required considerable labour, because a Masai himself seldom knows to which main clan to assign sub-clans other than his own.

[1] Cf. Hollis, p. 280. But the information there given is only partially correct.

614 The name of the main group 'Loodo mongi' is very liable to be confused with that of the sub-clan 'Loodo Kishu' because the former means " the blood-red buffaloes and the latter the blood-red cattle."

It is further difficult, if not impossible, to know whether to treat some of the divisions as clans or sub-clans.

The two words used by the Masai are *Ol piloti* (the clan) and *Enkishomi* (the sub-clan). But these words are not much help to the enquirer, because the Masai use each to some extent interchangeably.

Hollis, p. 280, speaks of a group of Masai called 'L-Oikop or Il-Lumbwa. I have been unable to discover these people. The tribe called Lumbwa, which lives to the west of the Masai area, is quite different in language and customs from the Masai, being similar to the Nandi.

(611)

Masai clans are associated with certain snakes as under :—

'L Aiwa ol Orosaine Orok (the black snakes 2), 'Laghoroner ol Arusei Sungai Orok (the thin black snake), Il Dareserre ol Aasrai Sero (the brown snake), Il Nabolloss all snakes.

597 *Adoption.*—The Masai like to adopt children, and even grown men, of other clans and other tribes, who may help them to herd their cattle. Of recent years they have also shown a tendency to adopt Kikuyu cultivators to plant maize for them in the more fertile areas Naivasi Nagure and Il Moli, west of the Rift valley. An adopted person is called O-Oiago. Having been adopted he is regarded as being a member of the family and clan of his adoption and has nothing to do with his former clan. He may even marry a woman of the sub-clan of his natural father, provided that it is not also the sub-clan of his adoption. But he may not marry or have sexual intercourse with a woman of the sub-clan of his adoption. Accordingly, an adopted Kikuyu may call himself a Masai, and even though he may be unable to speak the Masai language he is not telling a lie according to Masai ideas.

(543) (548)

When a man or boy is adopted as a herdsman he is treated by the head of the family as one of his own sons. He is given his herd of cattle and is helped to marry a wife. But if or when he elects to leave his adopted family he must go empty handed as he came, leaving behind him such cattle, wives and children as he may have acquired under adoption.

[554] An adopted man takes an inferior position socially to a well-born Masai. He could not in practice hold any important position in the tribe nor be able to marry a well-born Masai woman.

561 *Inheritance. Arrangements of Wives' Huts.*—Before dealing with inheritance 923 it is necessary to explain briefly the arrangement of huts in a village in order that the terms "right of the gate" and "left of the gate" may be understood.

12: Fan G-5 (1925-1950) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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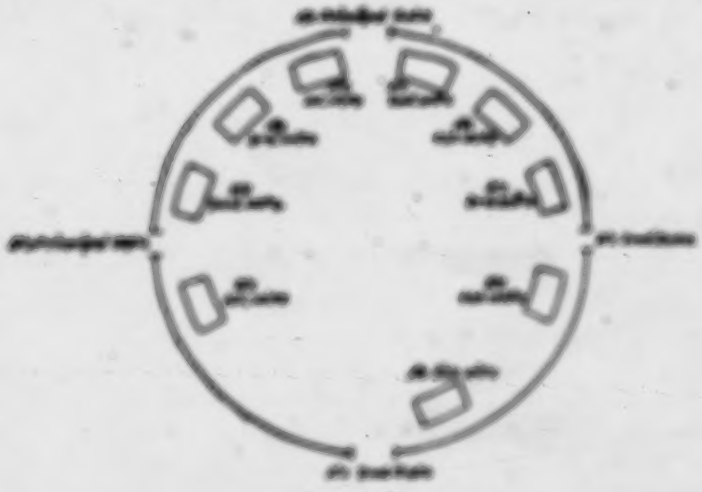
Each man of property has one or more village gates through which his herds enter and leave the village. His first wife builds her hut on the right (looking towards) of her husband's gate, the second wife on the left. The third wife will build next to and on the right of the first wife, and the fourth wife next to and on the left of the second wife.

The diagram below (Text-fig. 1) shows a village belonging to two elders, A and B, with the positions of their gates and of their wives' huts in relation thereto.

Where a man marries his first wife he hands over to her a portion of his stock, perhaps half, to look after. He hands to his second wife a slightly smaller herd and the first wife may add a few from her portion. The third and fourth wife receive their portions from the first and second wife respectively, and the husband may also



Text-fig. 1.

contribute a few. The fifth and subsequent wives receive a few cattle from each of the previous wives in order to form a herd.

Inheritance (Ilo Dalash).—When a woman has a husband alive, and at the same time a son who marries, she allots some cattle to this son, and they then become his property. On the death of the head of the family each wife divides her portion among her sons. If a wife is already dead her eldest son divides her portion among her sons.

The cattle from the portions on the right side of the gate cannot pass on inheritance to the left side unless there are no sons of the wives on the right, and vice versa. If a man dies without male issue his property goes to the nearest male relations in his sub-clan. If the first wife has no sons her portion is inherited by the sons of the other wives on the right of the gate. A man may bequeath

12: Fan G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL.12 Maasai FL.12 Kenya

492 a small legacy of a few cattle to anyone he likes, but the bulk of his property must be inherited according to the above rules.

493, 494 *Women's Property.*—As a general rule a woman cannot own cattle herself, but holds them in trust for her husband. I have twice come across exceptions to this :—

(a) A woman who had plied the profession of a doctor (i.e. native herbalist) and had received cattle in payment.

(b) A woman who had amassed wealth outside and independently of the tribe.

Household utensils such as gourds, hides, and donkey saddles belong to the women of the house.

175 791 648 639 *Laibons* (Masai, 'I-Oibonok).—Hollis, pp. 326-330, gives the history of the *Laibons* up to the beginning of the present century. I will therefore briefly commemorate their more recent history.

Lenana was made paramount chief of the Masai in Kenya Colony by the Government. He died in 1911. Some people thought that his brother *Sendeyo* had bewitched him, but little evidence need be attached to this opinion. He appointed his small son *Seggi* to succeed him. As *Seggi* was a minor, *Ngenyie*, son of *Sidai*, first cousin to *Lenana*, was appointed as regent. Between the years 1912 and 1922 it was the Kenya Government's policy to curtail the powers of the *Laibons*. *Seggi* grew up a weak and lovable person, who has little authority, and is more often drunk than sober. At one time he was deposed from paramount chiefdomship for persistent inebriety, but was subsequently re-appointed to be paramount chief of the Kajiado District only.

His brother, *Kimeroni*, is *Laibon* of the Purko section. He is a weak character, but voluptuous and beautiful. He is very untrustworthy owing to his desire to seem more important than his character warrants him to be.

Ngenyie is now a very old man. He is *Laibon* of the Kaloneyoki section. *Sendeyo* is *Laibon* of the Loita section. He was deported to Meru in 1920, it having been alleged that he was implicated in the rising of the II Kitoig age-group of the Purko at the end of 1919. He was allowed to return to Loita in 1928 and still lives there, much loved and respected.

Whereas in Kenya the power of the *Laibons* has been greatly reduced since *Lenana's* death, and councils of elders have been created to try and take their place in the government of the tribe, in Tanganyika Territory the authority of the *Laibon* has been upheld and he is regarded as the paramount chief. I believe that the system has worked well. Until recently their *Laibon* was *Parit*, a son of *Lenana*. *Parit* is now dead, and a minor, whose name escapes me, has succeeded him.

In Pl. XIII, Fig. 1, is seen a photograph of *Seggi* holding in his hand the bronze club of his grandfather, *Mbatian*, and the iron club of his father, *Lenana* (see *Hollis*, pp. 329 and 330). *Mbatian's* bronze club is at present in my possession, but should be returned to one of his descendants at some future date.

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Functions of Laibons.—A *Laibon* is far more than a mere medicine man or purveyor of charms. His function would seem to approach more closely that of a chief priest of the Israelites, and the *Il-Kidongi* sub-clan might be compared to the Levite tribe.

He is, or should be, the religious head of the tribe. No necessary but important enterprise should be undertaken without his blessing, in return for which he should be given a large present of cattle. He prays to God on behalf of the people. On one occasion Sendeyo arrived in my camp before sunrise, just as I was about to start on an excursion into the deep forest, and made a prayer for our safety. We stood round him and responded "*Ee-Ai!*" (= "O God!") at the pauses; I was too much taken by surprise to remember the details of the prayer except that it was very impressive, and that he ended by giving his genealogy (see Skeffe, p. 199) in order to show that the prayer was one which should receive attention.

The *Laibons* use charms (*inkidongi*) for various purposes, and their employment is invariably accompanied by prayer to God. I have a few of the charms in my possession and have been instructed in their use, under promise not to reveal my knowledge. Sendeyo once said to me that a good heart was better than charms.

Witchcraft.—Although the *Laibons* use charms, witchcraft, i.e. harmful magic, is not indispensable to their office. Some of them, however, are alleged to have made use of it. Witchcraft is not indigenous to the Maasai. Such persons as I have found practising black magic in Maasai country have learnt it from the Kikuyu of Kyasi District or from the Wasu.

Religion.—The Maasai believe in one God whom they call Ee-Ngai, which is the same word as they use for rain. They say that God is one, but possesses many things. He may be prayed to as inhabiting a wood, a stream, the earth, etc., but He is all the same God. The Maasai only use short prayers such as "*Ee-Ai!*" (O God) and "*Ee-Ai nibiina*" (O God do not strike me) except for the prayers at *Il-Pul* and those of *Laibons* already mentioned. Some, if not all, of the ceremonies have a religious significance, but I cannot give details without further experience.

Superstitions.—There are certain old men with holes in them, in which a Maasai puts a handful of grass or leaves when he passes. They have told me that this is equivalent to a prayer. "*May I live to be old like this man.*"

A traveller sometimes puts a stone in the fork of the branch of a tree near the track in order that he may arrive at his destination before nightfall.

There are a few places where the passer-by should tie a knot in the grass. I am uncertain of the reasons for this.

When the new moon is first seen people pluck grass and throw it towards the moon, saying, "*Ingishi o-nono ai-nah-nanishu ai-dong'*" (= "Give me the body which is long and I give you the short." I do not know the significance of this.

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777 It is lucky to see a fish eagle (*Haliaëtus vocifer*) sitting on a tree if it is facing the observer. It is unlucky to see a single wild pig, but lucky if a number of pigs cross the path from left to right in front of the traveller.

There are several other superstitions, but they seem to be told in little, if any, more importance than most of our own, e.g. seeing the new moon through glass, encountering reptiles, spitting when a hare crosses one's path, etc.

514 516 *Spitting* is a greeting and brings good luck. One is asked to spit on a new-born baby. I have sometimes been spat on in a similar way by very old men and women—a somewhat trying ordeal which had to be patiently endured. Moreover, a Masai may spit on his palm before shaking hands in order to give an exceptionally warm greeting. It is then etiquette to follow his example.

773 *History.*—The Masai have little historical tradition. Some of it is given in Hollis, pp. 268-273. They are said to have come from a place in the North called by them *Eudejo* a hundred generations (of 15 years each) ago. The generation nearest the present time, working backwards as far as they are remembered, are:—*O Tuati, O Tolelo, O Aimer, O Ngongoni, O Tuati, O Kidete, I Matidabor, O Tingi, O Sabooti*, and *O Mudogo*. Those before this have been forgotten. When they left Eudejo there were no *Laibons*, so the elders arranged about the ceremonies. The warrior and age-group system was already in being, having been instituted by Mabooa Kay (see Hollis, p. 268). The customs of group marriage and of free love between the warriors and the girls were also in existence.

There were four tribes in Eudejo—the Masai, the Uasinbe, the Kikuyu and the *O Siamous* (meaning). God gave the cattle to the Masai and the wild beasts to the Uasinbe. He told the Kikuyu to go to the mountains and the plain of many rivers and to eat grass. He gave iron to the smiths and provided them with stones to beat it with. These four tribes were all friends together.

248 *Restrictions as to Food.*—Besides those mentioned above as applying to warriors and junior elders, the following apply to all Masai:—

They must not eat the flesh of wild animals.

They must not drink milk soon after eating meat.

Women must not be seen eating meat or drinking milk by men of their husband's generation.

825 *Months and Days.*—The Masai divide the year into the following months:—

O Ildoilo. Blooming unknown.

O-ri-ai — Green in the hollows. (About February.)

O Ange Gegi'ak — When the bulls are tied up.

O e Sogoroi el e Lapalasi — When the Pleiades are in the West.

O e Ng'ongi Lapalasi — When the Pleiades are in the East.

O Kojo Nai — The short black intestine. So called because it is the month of circumcision, and therefore boys are shaved.

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Ol Odoherobor — The Thunderer and 2nd month dries.
Ol Olenjorej — Light showers and 2nd month dries.
Ol Tumuri. Blooming unbowers and 2nd dries.
Ol el Aibor Aiv — The month of the white water

The following are the days of the month :—

1. *Ol Kendei* — Full moon.
2. *Ol Ongori* — When is clear green.
3. *Ol Ongoki* — When is clear red.
4. *Enebish Enaiserupa* — The beginning of the moon.
5. *Enebish E Gipuroon* — They wane the moon (?).
6. *Enebish e Nabarbar* — The red moon (?).

The other days are not named. But one may refer to a day as, for example, "the eighth day of the moon," that is, counting from the time when the old moon disappeared. The dark days between old and new moon are called *Enaiserie* — the darkness.

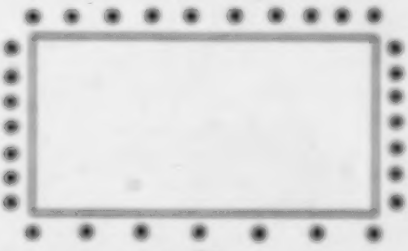

FIG. 2.

Hut-building.—The Maasai frequently move from one place to another in order to seek the best grazing and water for their cattle. They are therefore constantly deserting old villages and building new ones. If time permits, after the day's march is over and before darkness sets in, each woman sets to work to build a hut, even if it is only to be occupied for one night.

She first cuts a number of straight sticks about 5 feet long and brings them to the place where she wants to build. She takes six of these sticks and marks out an oblong about 5 feet by 4 feet with them and places little bibbs of sun-dung (*Enoshke*) round it at 9 inches or 10 inches interval (Text-fig. 2). She then drives a hole in the ground through each bibb of sun-dung to a depth of 10 inches or so with a pointed stake called *Enamoro*. The sun-dung lubricates the point of the stake and makes it easier to pierce the ground. The holes slope slightly outwards from bottom to top. She then drives an upright into each hole, after which she binds the tops of the uprights to a plant wand which runs all round horizontally, having every fourth or fifth upright unbound.

345. Pl. XV, Fig. 1 shows a woman who has put in the upright sticks and bound them with wands on the side farthest from the camera.

[348] She then passes an hide between the food and the few uprights on three sides to form walls. She leaves the fourth side open at first, but later closes it with a screen called *S-lim*, which divides the calf pen from the place where the people sleep. *S-lim*

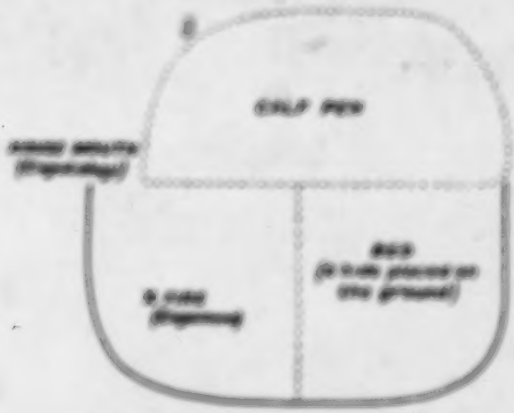

FIG. 2.—

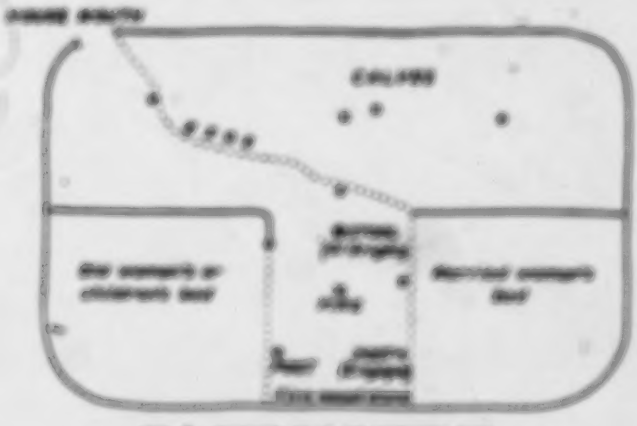

FIG. 3.—

is made of split bamboos tied together with cord, and may be seen in front of the women in Pl. XV, Fig. 1.

The last walls of hides are shown in Pl. XV, Fig. 3. Sticks are then tied across the top from one side to the other. They bend outwardly upwards in a slight arch, and skins are laid over them to form a roof. Pl. XV, Figs. 2 and 4 show huts which

are ready for one night's occupation. Text-fig. 3 shows the ground plan. It takes two to three hours to build. If it is to be occupied for some time the walls and roof are strengthened and the holes are gradually replaced by cow-dung plastered on a backing of *Lobelium* leaves or other suitable vegetable material. The whole, including the calf pen, is enclosed and sealed with cow-dung plaster. A small hole (*E-Lengai*) is usually made at the top of the wall above the fire-wood store to let out some of the smoke. The beds (*En-Dabash* or *E-Kuni*) are made of poles put on top of poles placed close together and raised about a foot from the ground. Text-fig. 4 shows the ground plan of a finished hut.

Grass tufts on the floor are just left to dry up and get trampled out of existence. Repairs are done by the women of the house, and consist in filling up cracks with wet cow-dung. Pots, bags and nets are uncommon in Masai huts. Dried gall-bladders and dry cow-dung are sometimes burnt as an insectifuge. The young people are not infested with body lice; but throw utensil on the ogol, taking refuge in boat necklaces and other ornaments.

When the people move on the village is usually left to fall into ruins, but it may be encouraged later if desired, and if it has not yet fallen beyond repair.

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[P 466-A]

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Fig. 1.—[illegible]

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Fig. 2.—[illegible]

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[P.466-B]

[For general elaboration and critique of sources i: Hollis and ii: Leahey, see source 12: Fox, category (16.)]